

Theme: No human can enter the kingdom of God by their own works or efforts but only by the grace and work of God.

## I. Intro - Luther's appearance at Worms

- A. April 17, 18 1521 - Luther appeared at Worms
- B. He had been used by God to recover the Gospel
- C. The Church rejected this and called for him to recant
- D. Humans want to justify ourselves
- E. We see this in our text today

## II. A Shocking Conversation

### A. A man comes to Jesus to learn

As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" Mark 10:17

- 1. A man runs up to Jesus and falls on his knees
- 2. He refers to Jesus as a "Good teacher"
- 3. He does not argue with Jesus but asks a question
- 4. He asks a question about eternal life.
- 5. This seems to be a good start to the conversation!

### B. Jesus' pointed reply

"Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good — except God alone. Mark 10:18

- 1. This is surprising at first!
- 2. The man seemed to be showing Jesus respect - so why the rebuke?
- 3. But we will see why Jesus makes this point up front!

### C. Jesus' answer to the question

You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.'" Mark 10:19

- 1. Jesus points the young man to God's Law
- 2. He specifically points him to the 2<sup>nd</sup> table of the law - our responsibility to our fellow humans
- 3. Commands 6, 7, 8, 9 and 5 are listed
- 4. In place of 'Do not covet' Jesus says 'Do not defraud' - perhaps the man has gained riches by means of a system that defrauds others.
- 5. Jesus is trying to help the man see his sin
  - a. The Law of God should show us our sin
  - b. His specific failures must have been related to other humans
  - c. How will he respond?

### D. The man's reply

"Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy." Mark 10:20

- 1. He says he has kept God's Law since his youth
- 2. He has certainly not kept them perfectly, but he means that he has lived a moral life
- 3. Paul similarly referred to his life as a Pharisee as "blameless"

If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: <sup>5</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; <sup>6</sup> as for zeal, persecuting the church; **as for righteousness based on the law, faultless.** Philippians 3:4-6 (NIV2011)

4. The young man is not claiming perfection, but he is claiming that he has faithfully followed God's Law in a manner that would warrant eternal life.
5. He thinks that he has been "good" (but remember Jesus' initial reply!)

#### E. Jesus' shocking reply

Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." <sup>22</sup> At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth. Mark 10:21-22

1. Jesus is not angry with him - he LOVES him.
2. But he also knows that the man is enslaved to an idol, and true love wants to set someone free from such slavery!
3. Jesus commands him to sell everything he has, give it to the poor, and then become part of Jesus' band of disciples!
4. v22 - the surprise - the man is very wealthy!
5. Matthew and Luke add he was young and a ruler
6. This wealth is his idol and it is what is preventing him from truly following God.
  - a. This is why Jesus focused on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Table of the Law - he needed to love others
  - b. This is why Jesus requires this man to sell everything, give it all to the poor and then to come and follow Him (but does not do it with Zaccheus)
  - c. It is clear that Jesus was driving at the man's true god - his wealth and the possessions and power it brought.

7. The man walks away from Jesus - his god has been revealed & he chooses his wealth over the kingdom.
8. The rich young ruler had seemed to want to serve God, but his true god was his wealth and the power, position, possessions, and privileges it afforded - and he chose this over becoming a disciple of Jesus.

### III. Entering the Kingdom

#### A. Jesus teaches on the entering the kingdom of God

Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!" <sup>24</sup>The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! <sup>25</sup> It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." <sup>26</sup> The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, "Who then can be saved?" <sup>27</sup> Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God." Mark 10:23-27

1. "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom!"
2. The disciples are amazed and Jesus doubles down!
3. The camel and the eye of the needle
  - a. Many have tried to get around the obvious point!
  - b. There was no gate known as the eye of the needle
  - c. It is easier for a huge camel to go through the tiniest eye of a needle for a human being to enter the kingdom of God!
4. The disciples are even more amazed - who can be saved then?

5. This is impossible for humans - but not for God!

- a. The impossibility is THE point!
- b. A human can no more earn their way into the kingdom of God than they can shove a camel through the eye of a needle!
- c. If we are going to enter the kingdom it will have to be the work of God!
- d. This is not just true for some (such as the rich - v23); it is true for all (v24)

B. The price of entry - empty hands

As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"<sup>18</sup> "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good — except God alone. Mark 10:17-18

1. The rich young ruler wanted to know what he could do to save himself, and Jesus had relentlessly show Him there was nothing he could do to save Himself
  - a. There is NO ONE good except God alone
  - b. Have you loved your neighbor as yourself?
  - c. Have you gained wealth by defrauding others?
  - d. If you really love them - share your wealth!
2. The rich young ruler was trying to save himself but he could not!
3. His inability was shown when Jesus asked him to forsake his wealth - and he could not do it!

4. Trusting in the riches of my own works/flesh

If anyone else thinks he has reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more:<sup>5</sup> circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee;<sup>6</sup> as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for legalistic righteousness, faultless. Philippians 3:4-6

- a. Paul's confidence and god was not wealth but his own religious zeal and works!
- b. If anyone deserved to enter the kingdom it was him!
- c. Like the rich young ruler he was faultless and was counting on his own works to save him!

5. Forsaking all for Christ!

But whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ.<sup>8</sup> What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish, that I may gain Christ<sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ — the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith. Philippians 3:7-9

- a. Paul forsook the riches of his own works for the riches of Christ's works for him!
- b. Paul forsook everything to know Jesus!
- c. He understood that the righteousness needed to enter the kingdom was not his own righteousness from doing the law, but the righteousness of Christ that is received by faith alone!

## IV. Applying the Word

### A. Have I entered the Kingdom of God?

1. Jesus' shocking words on entering the kingdom
2. We are hard-wired to earn our way into the kingdom
3. Since the garden, we want to make ourselves equal to God, including by saving ourselves.
4. But this is IMPOSSIBLE for humans!
5. The entrance requirement for the kingdom is to admit that I am as helpless as an infant, as bankrupt as a starving beggar, and in need of God's grace and power to save me!
6. This section of Mark is relentlessly teaching this point because my pride does not want to admit and embrace this reality!
7. Have I admitted that I can not save myself?
8. Have I forsaken everything, including my own worthiness, to follow Christ?

### B. Come to Jesus for rest

1. Those who have already believed in Christ need to hear this as well!
2. I am tempted to turn back to justifying myself before God by my works - and this is exhausting!
3. I am tempted to find my identity in my works, my vocation, my achievements, my gifts, my reputation, etc. - but my identity is found in Jesus alone!
4. Jesus invites us to come to Him to receive true, deep, lasting rest!

5. You may feel aware of areas of faithlessness - God is faithful!
6. Let the character of our God strengthen and encourage you today!

### C. The Table of Rest

1. We come to this Table to receive rest from Jesus
2. Here we set our works aside and receive the work of Jesus on our behalf
3. Matthew 11:28-30; Hebrews 4:9-11 reading
4. Come Unto Jesus lyric video during communion

## Lessons for Disciples - Entering The Kingdom

Mark 10:17-31

April 21, 2024

Communion

2 Corinthians 13:14

Teaching keywords: Kingdom of God; salvation and deliverance; Gospel; money and finances; discipleship

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. 2  
Corinthians 13:14

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eternal life.<sup>31</sup> But many who are first will be last, and the last first.” Mark 10:17-31